



REPORT

Joint Policy Roundtable

Codesigning an inclusive Europe

Migration and migrants in the EU

Challenging narratives – modifying practices – influencing policies

March 1st, 2022

08:30-16:30

Norwegian House of Research and Innovation, Brussels



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Executive Summary of policy recommendations

The joint policy roundtable “Inclusive Europe 2022” resulted in a list of main policy recommendations addressing the topics of migration and inclusion in Europe:

1. Promote fair and equal [co-creation](#) in decision- and policy-making, in particular at the local level. Local civil society and migrant groups should be made part of decisions pertaining to everyday life in the community and should receive adequate funding for their contributions.
2. Foster a [human-rights](#) based approach to inclusion and integration.
3. Create infrastructures and systems that recognize migrants’ [qualifications](#) (both formal and informal ones) and facilitate their easy [access to labour markets](#).
4. Highlight the [diversity](#) of migrants as complex human beings with pasts, heritages, and skills.
5. Create [school curricula](#) that normalize migration, decolonize European memory discourse, and include lessons about migrants’ cultures and heritages.
6. Create an [inclusive housing policy](#), with migrants and locals living side by side, not in isolation. Offer infrastructures that [foster quality interactions](#).
7. Recognize and [treat migrants’ traumas](#) not only as caused by forced migration but also by discrimination and racism in the host countries.
8. Communicate relevant information on rights, opportunities, and local infrastructures for support in the [migrants’ languages, while facilitating migrants’ acquisition of the language of the host community](#).
9. Expand the legal definition of a refugee and extend the rights of refugees towards other protection-seeking migrants.
10. [Reach out, communicate and engage with those of opposing views](#). Create the opportunity for constructive dialogues.
11. Better utilize the outcomes of H2020 research projects i.e., by creating [sustainable solutions for knowledge transfer](#).

Introduction

Including migrants in the European Union has not been a uniform process and has revealed several obstacles in the path of making the inclusion and integration of people on the move efficient, humane, and dignified. This roundtable aimed at informing future policy development and research in this field. Findings from ten Horizon2020 projects were presented on legal protection of refugees and migrants, on the (economic, cultural, political) impact of their presence on local, regional, or European constituencies, on innovative solutions to enhancing integration and cohesion, and on the role of domestic agents. The event brought together researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to discuss the potential of re-interpreting existing narratives, to present good practices resulting from the ongoing projects, and to inform political decision-making processes.

The roundtable consisted of two parts: The morning session first introduced the European Commission’s approaches to research and migration and contextualized the topic in the emerging urgency that the ongoing invasion of Ukraine has generated for the inhabitants of Ukraine as well as wider Europe. These accounts framed and informed the following discussions at the event, whose theme took on an even



timelier dimension. Two parallel panels followed, dedicated to (i) *Economic, legal, and social factors and practices of inclusion*, as well as (ii) *Fostering* exchange and challenging narratives in cultural spaces. In each session, five research projects presented their findings and discussed policy recommendations on social cohesion, inclusion, representation, and protection practices.

A following panel discussion focused on implementation challenges as well as future possibilities and potential. The exchange between researchers, practitioners, and politicians is highly relevant to inform policies and create the more holistic perspective needed to approach the topics of migration and integration. Many relevant points have been identified throughout the day, such as the prevailing mismatch between existing EU policies and local expectations and actions, and the need to communicate narratives not only with like-minded but across different oppositions, addressing rather than ignoring the internally torn European discourse on migration and integration.

This event brought together various researchers, policymakers, and practitioners from 34 countries including 21 EU countries, representing over 130 institutions, to co-design inclusive solutions to emerging and recurring challenges in inclusion and migration practices. The European Commission was represented by two speakers: Michalis Moschovakos from DG for Research and Innovation, presenting the EC state of play and future priorities on research and migration at the EU level, as well as Luca Barani from DG Employment, Social Affairs, and Inclusion, who contributed with insights on the EC Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion and its links to AMIF funding. From the European Parliament, three MEPs contributed to the discussions: MEP Róza Thun gave a highly relevant introduction to migration and inclusion reflecting on the migration flows currently growing in Eastern Europe. MEP Evin Incir shared her insights both on the ongoing war in Ukraine and the general European approach to migration governance via a video message, and Kamilla Solieva joined the panel discussion on behalf of MEP Damian Boeselager with further reflections on good practices and the need for policy reforms. The discussions were further enriched by contributions from two migrant-led companies, Top Manta and WeExist, whose (co-)founders, Papalaye Abdoulaye Seck and Obada Otabashi joined for insights on labour market access and the barriers that still prevail.

The event was live broadcasted via its [website](#) and recordings continue to be available. With over 250 online registrations, active social media engagement, and direct outreach to at least 500 institutions, the roundtable reached a diverse group of actors from universities, EU institutions, NGO's, CSO's, cultural as well as political foundations across the EU. The rich ensemble of speakers and presenters both from the research community, as well as EU-level policymakers and migrants, offered an ideal environment for practical as well as conceptual discussions. The following report will present the main take-aways and summarize solutions and recommendations to further inform policy development.



Programme

- 08:30 Welcome**
Anamaria Dutceac Segesten, Lund University, SO-CLOSE & PROTECT
- 09:00 Research and Migration at the EU level. State of play and future priorities.**
Michalis Moschovakos, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation
- 09:20 Europe looking East – introductory remarks on migration and inclusion**
Róza Thun und Hohenstein, MEP, Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs
- 09:45 Humanitarian situation at Ukrainian-Polish border**
Rafał Kostrzyński, UNHCR Poland
- 10:00 Break-out sessions**
- (i) Economic, legal, and social factors and practices of inclusion**
Moderator: Massoud Sharifi Dryaz, Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain
- FOCUS – Dynamic Integration: The Reality and Ways Forward**
Peter MacDonagh, Q4 Public Relations, Ireland
- MATILDE – Migrant Inclusion as a multi-level and multidimensional process**
Jussi Laine, University of Eastern Finland
- PROTECT – The UN Global Compacts and the right to international protection: Investigating interactions of the Compacts with pre-existing laws and policies on the rights of protection seeking migrants**
Pauline Endres de Oliveira, University of Giessen, Germany
- SIRIUS – Designing an EU inclusive society: the role of migrant labour market integration policies**
Simone Baglioni, University of Parma
- WELCOMINGSPACES – Policies and Governance in building welcoming spaces in Altenburg, Thuringia (Germany)**
José Ricardo Martins, University of Siegen, Germany
- (ii) Fostering exchange and challenging narratives in cultural spaces**
Moderator: Dominika Kasprowicz, Villa Decius Association, Poland
- CHIEF -Investing in Culture for Young Europeans**
Mariona Ferrer-Fons, Pompeu Fabra University, Spain
- TRACTION – Opera Co-Creation for a social transformation**
Mikel Zorrilla Berasategui, Vicomtech, Spain
- MICADO – Remediating Migration Divides Through Digital Services: what inclusion is possible?**



Carla De Tona, Bologna University, Italy

PERCEPTIONS – Creative interventions – challenging migration narratives and policy responses

Sergei Shubin, Swansea University, UK

SO-CLOSE – Promoting mutual understanding between refugees and the local communities in Europe: Policy recommendations

Elena Monicelli, Peace School Foundation of Monte Sole, Italy

12:00 Lunch Break

13:15 EC Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021 – 2027 and links with AMIF funding 2021-2027 (Union Actions)

Luca Barani, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission

13:40 Top Manta - Ethical streetwear co-operative for legal labour market access

Papalaye Abdoulaye Seck, Top Manta, Spain

14:00 Panel Discussion

Moderator: Anamaria Dutceac Segesten, Lund University | SO-CLOSE & PROTECT

Panel members:

Ainhoa Flecha, Autonomous University of Barcelona | SO-CLOSE

Alagie Jinkang, University of Bologna | PERCEPTION

Annelies Zoomers, Utrecht University | WelcomingSpaces

Carla de Tona, University of Bologna | MICADO

Damian Boeselager, MEP | LIBE – represented by Kamilla Solieva

Evin Incir, MEP | LIBE

Hakan Sicakkan, University of Bergen | PROTECT

Jussi Laine, University of Eastern Finland | MATILDE

Maria Mexi, Graduate Institute Geneva - Albert Hirschman Centre on Democracy | SIRIUS

Mariona Ferrer-Fons, Pompeu Fabra University | CHIEF

Mikel Zorrilla Berasategui, VicomTech | TRACTION

Peter MacDonagh, Q4 Public Relations | FOCUS

Research and Migration at the EU level. State of play and future priorities.

Michalis Moschovakos, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation

Michalis Moschovakos, DG RTD policy officer shared insights on EU's future priorities regarding migration, inclusion, and the research within these fields.

"Our vision is to harvest the knowledge produced by H2020 projects and translate them into tangible policy results by funding the creation of a research network."



Michalis Moschovakos (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Reflecting on the Horizon2020 framework (2014 - 2020), over 40 projects across 35 countries on migration with an investment of nearly 100 million euros have been financed. This can be seen as a direct response to the increase of people on the move since 2014. Special emphasis was put on research topics around migration governance, forced displacement, integration, readmission policies, migrant decision-making processes, climate change, narratives, and discourses, as well as forecasting.

With the new framework Horizon Europe now in place, the European Commission continues its focus on funding migration and mobility projects as well as emphasizing the relevance of research-practice-policy connections by supporting cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral collaborations. For 2021/22, 30 million euro have been allocated to cover topics around irregular migration and migrant decision-making processes. The practical as well as conceptual findings of the various research projects are highly relevant and there is a strong need to strengthen the communication between policy and decision-makers and the research community as well as their stakeholders by translating the findings into tangible policy recommendations. Therefore, the vision for 2023/24 is to fund a research network that builds on the findings of H2020 projects and translates them into tangible policy results.

Europe looking East – introductory remarks on migration and inclusion

Róża Thun und Hohenstein, MEP, Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs

Polish MEP Róża Thun contributed with both personal accounts and pragmatic perspectives on the complex process of migration. Opening her talk with a quote by her father, the focus was directed at the value of diversity and change:

"Civilization makes progress when different people meet, when we are able to create the ground for them to meet."



Róża Thun (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

MEP Róża Thun stressed that without migrants, her hometown Kraków would not have the rich cultural and architectural monuments it has these days, which is an observation easily extractable onto most places within Europe.

Highlighting that the current numbers of people on the move are yet to reach their peak, Ms Thun acknowledged the challenge this poses to EU politicians while also offering a chance to apply the lessons learned in the past. The Schengen borders should not be walls or a place where migrants suffer, and the solidarity and welcoming attitude currently witnessed at the Ukrainian borders gives hope in this regard.

However, it cannot stay unacknowledged that Ukrainians currently crossing the borders into Poland and other neighbouring countries receive a very different treatment to i.e., third-country students, especially those from African countries, who are facing rejection or stricter checks at the borders. Europe has never been more united in taking care of the Ukrainian refugees, but the same treatment needs to be extended to all people fleeing persecution and war. It is time for the EU to rethink who is deserving of a welcoming reception and support.

Humanitarian situation at the Ukrainian-Polish border

Rafał Kostrzyński, UNHCR Poland

UNHCR Poland spokesperson Rafał Kostrzyński joined the roundtable to share on-the-ground insights on the current humanitarian situation at the Ukrainian-Polish border. The average number of people fleeing from Ukraine is about one hundred thousand people a day, which poses a challenge to management and governance. At the time of reporting, the situation at the crossing points is calm and the movement smooth, even though people are facing many hours without food or sleep. Citizens are offering donations in form of food, clothing, and hygiene items, as well as temporary accommodation. Both citizens and local authorities show great willingness to help. The UNHCR aim to expand their humanitarian involvement in both Poland and Ukraine, which depends on governmental decisions. A prognosis of the migration flow is difficult as it highly depends on the development of the war.



Anamaria Dutceac Segesten and Rafał Kostrzyński (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

“The movement onward into the continent is very dynamic and currently motivated to a big extent by family ties or other existing personal networks of the people fleeing Ukraine.”

With the growing numbers of displaced people within Europe, the projects’ results and roundtable discussions are embedded in a very timely context. This does not diminish the urgency and relevance of each of the other contexts the projects have worked within, but rather invites the questions of “How can the projects’ findings be extrapolated and inform this new situation and which of the previously learned lessons can guide decision-makers in the present and future?”

Break-out sessions

To highlight policy relevant research findings and identify commonalities across projects, two break-out sessions took place: One focused on the economic, legal, and social factors and practices of inclusion, the other addressed fostering exchange and challenging narratives.

Break-out session (i): Economic, legal, and social factors and practices of inclusion

Moderator: Massoud Sharifi Dryaz, Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain

The five projects in Break-out session (i) *Economic, legal, and social factors and practices of inclusion* were:

- **FOCUS** – Dynamic Integration: The Reality and Ways Forward | *Peter MacDonagh, Q4 Public Relations, Ireland*
- **MATILDE** – Migrant Inclusion as a multi-level and multidimensional process | *Jussi Laine, University of Eastern Finland*
- **PROTECT** – The UN Global Compacts and the right to international protection: Investigating interactions of the Compacts with pre-existing laws and policies on the rights of protection seeking migrants | *Pauline Endres de Oliveira, University of Giessen, Germany*
- **SIRIUS** – Designing an EU inclusive society: the role of migrant labour market integration policies | *Simone Baglioni, University of Parma*
- **WELCOMINGSAPACES** – Policies and Governance in building welcoming spaces in Altenburg, Thuringia (Germany) | *José Ricardo Martins, University of Siegen, Germany*

FOCUS – Dynamic Integration: The Reality and Ways Forward

Peter MacDonagh, Q4 Public Relations, Ireland



Peter MacDonagh (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

FOCUS is an international consortium which has undertaken a deep look at key dynamics underpinning integration in Europe through both research and practice-focused activity. Using the EU's definition of integration as a "dynamic two-way process", FOCUS has explored the dimensions of 'what matters?' and 'what works?'

The project has completed the first broad surveys which have explored, in a European context, both the socio-economic and socio-psychological dimensions of integration.

Over 5,000 people participated in extensive qualitative and quantitative work undertaken in Germany, Sweden, Croatia and Jordan. Research was carried out with post-2015 refugees from Syria (the arriving community) and the longer-term residents of the cities where they now live (the receiving community). Involving over 100 questions, the results provide a deep understanding of the current situation of these communities.

The FOCUS research shows that, contrary to many predictions at the time, the fundamental influences on integration have not changed significantly with the migration of this group to Europe. Integration is



accepted by both communities as their preferred objective in terms of acculturation and there are many positive attitudes which can serve as a basis for integration. However, the levels of contact between communities remain low. This is particularly an issue with the receiving community, where the responsibility to promote integration is abstract rather than internalised – effectively putting responsibility on institutions rather than communities. This remains the single biggest overall barrier to integration.

The research also pointed to misperceptions of the current status of refugees (underestimating education levels and over-estimating dependence), the negative impact of the non-recognition of qualifications and a number of other barriers to integration.

The practice-stream of FOCUS carried out a detailed review of current practices and guidance in the field of integration in Europe. Senior policy and programme makers ranging from the European Council to cities were interviewed and a systematic process of engagement and cocreation was undertaken to determine the most effective way of making the knowledge base available and useful to what is a very diverse community of integration practice.

The *FOCUS Approach to Dynamic Integration* is a practical framework to strengthen existing promising integration practices and support the development of new ones. At its core is the idea of fostering social bonds, connections, and bridges among arriving and receiving communities. The FOCUS Approach highlights key elements to promote trust and reciprocity, social connectedness, wellbeing, resilience and a sense of belonging of all community members. It was developed through key informant interviews, group consultations and workshops with policy and programme leaders and practitioners to identify best dynamic integration practices and explore practitioner needs.

Policy Recommendations

- The active promotion of more extensive and substantive engagement between arriving and receiving communities needs to be addressed as a core priority in integration work.
- Actions should include a greater element of targeting and tailoring to individuals and community contexts.
- The lack of contact between the communities increases the need for more active work to ensure that basic facts are shared. In particular, information showing both the real situation of arriving community members and the progress of integration needs to be regularly disseminated and the media engaged.
- Core practical barriers to integration remain important: legal status and right to employment, recognition of qualifications, family reunion, housing quality and support beyond reception period. Addressing these can have a very positive impact.
- The impact of racism and discrimination on integration should be recognised and understood as an issue which should be considered throughout integration practice.
- A structured approach should be taken to ensuring that integration programmes are developed, implemented and evaluated in light of four key elements. Specifically, they should address:
 - *Mental Health and Psychosocial Support* (MHPSS) in general and not simply through referral to medical settings.



- Engage both *Arriving and Receiving Communities*, with volunteerism potentially playing a very significant role.
- Programmes should be developed and implemented through *Participative & Cocreative Approaches*.
- To maximise impact, where possible programmes should involve Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships and Coordination.
- Given their central role in shaping practice, funding and evaluation forms should reflect these key elements.

MATILDE – Migrant Inclusion as a multi-level and multidimensional process

Jussi Laine, University of Eastern Finland

MATILDE focuses on the impact of migration on the local development of rural and mountain regions. The project develops and tests a transdisciplinary conceptual and methodological framework for a multi-dimensional assessment of the economic and social impacts of Third Country Nationals. By adopting a participatory approach, MATILDE promotes a change in perceptions and practices. The project considers place-based and path-dependent factors that contribute to determining the impact of TCNs in rural and mountain regions.

Building on the first MATILDE results:



Jussi Laine (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Language acquisition remains an important issue for economic and social inclusion in rural and mountain regions of Europe. Language skills increase with time spent in the destination country through exposure and learning by doing. Given the existing structures, which may remain in contrast to the official rhetoric used, migrant workers often have to take up jobs that are poorly paid, precarious and not accepted by the local population. Better job opportunities and the related upward social mobility foster

motivation in the acquisition of local languages. Supportive incentives needed and access to training and learning by doing should be expanded. Learning the local language alone is, however, not enough. Migrants often lack knowledge about the region they live in, and information about options for active civic participation and co-creation. A particular focus should be put on the empowerment and active inclusion of migrant women in social and economic life.

Discrimination, xenophobia – in cases, racism – remain as major challenges for the participation of immigrants. Intercultural mediators can play an important role to overcome reservations and prejudices and foster the bridges between locals and rural newcomers. Initiatives are needed that promote good interactions between migrants and locals. Openness towards migrants can be increased by making local

and regional (policy) actors more aware of and acknowledge the migrants' positive social and economic contributions to local and regional communities and economies.

Social inclusion depends on meaningful interactions with the local population (social bridges), members of the community (social bonds) and key actors in the administration or other entities (social links). Need to increase the visibility of migrants as normal part of community and the sense of shared community (belonging).

Labour inclusion: structured and faster recognition procedures are needed where migrants can have their formally acquired qualifications certified, but also informal and practical qualifications recognized. This need has become ever more prevalent during the COVID-19 pandemic. The needs of regional / local labour markets should be taken more into account and migrants specifically trained towards labour market needs. This requires coordinated education and training concepts, including secondary and tertiary education paths. Promoting labour market inclusion of migrants, also fosters their social inclusion and help them to better settle in the region.

Considering the demographic trends, measures that promote the migrants' long-term settlement are particularly important. Staying in the region can be promoted through labour market inclusion, which in turn fosters social inclusion. While there is need for coordinated goals and concepts between the different government levels, strengthening local/regional governance with place-based policies is vital as that is where immigrant inclusion takes place. Local policy makers and employers play a key role in the migrant inclusion processes. The action takes should acknowledge the specific features and diversity of rural areas: the concrete needs may differ significantly reflecting spatio-structural preconditions, local attitudes, but also the different migrant groups. Immigrants tend to be likelier to stay in rural areas if the structural preconditions meet their (current and future) aspirations.

PROTECT – The UN Global Compacts and the right to international protection

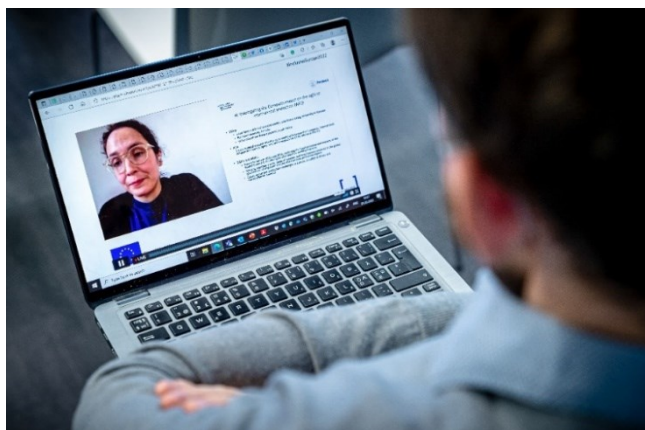
Pauline Endres de Oliveira, University of Giessen, Germany

This input provided an outline of key issues addressed within the PROTECT project, including the key findings from the EU Expert Forum 2021, an international conference of experts working in the field of migration governance.

PROTECT aims at:

- developing the conceptual, theoretical, and methodological tools needed to understand the right to international protection as a multilevel and trans-level phenomenon
- identifying whether or how the objectives and substance of the Global Compacts on Refugees and on Migration (GCM) are aligned with the right to international protection (the rights dimension)
- assessing which governance modes (actors, structures, and networks) serve best the goal of aligning the Global Compacts with the right to international protection (the governance dimension)





Pauline Endres De Oliveira presenting online (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

- detecting societal discourses which promote the recognition of the primacy of human rights and the right to international protection (the recognition dimension)
- discovering ways of aligning the Global Compacts with human rights and the right to international protection

The EU Expert Forum organized by the Justus Liebig University in 2021 was a full-day conference taking place online on 10 September 2021. Its aim was to explore how the GCM affects the rights of refugees and

other protection-seeking migrants. Key issues were the role of the GCM in providing alternative pathways to protection, the relevance of the GCM for economic and social rights independent of a protection status, and the potential of the GCM to strengthen the rights of protection-seeking migrants in the context of immigration detention.

The EU Expert Forum 2021 found that the Global Compacts reflect important political affirmation of refugee protection and human rights commitments in the context of migration. While they do not set any new standards, they reflect binding international human rights law and should therefore guide law making processes at national and EU level. To address today's global protection needs, the relevance of **the GCM for protection-seeking migrants**, who do not qualify as refugees under the 1951 Refugee Convention, **needs to be recognized and considered in law and policy**. The GCM and the GCR objectives should be read together **to avoid the existing dichotomy between refugees and other protection-seeking migrants** and resulting protection gaps. An important area where GCM and GCR objectives overlap is safe and legal access to territorial protection. Both the GCM and the GCR point to the necessity of creating legal pathways to safely reach a state to seek protection. Thereby, the GCM complements the GCR in important ways, as it broadens the call for humanitarian pathways to forcibly displaced, who do not qualify as refugees under the refugee Convention. An important example are individuals who are forced to flee due to natural disasters and climate change.

Overall, the effects of the Global Compacts as soft law instruments depend on the specifics of implementation. An issue here is that states have a wide margin of discretion on how to implement GCR and GCM objectives. Thereby, the requirements of implementation are very vague as compared to its objectives. As a result, ongoing law-making processes at national and EU level do not reflect specific commitments to the GCM. In some instances, migration policies do even counter-act GCM objectives. Case in point, the objective of making immigration detention a measure of last resort and avoid any immigration detention of children is not reflected in the ongoing reform process of the CEAS. **Review and implementation mechanisms of the Compacts need to be strengthened in order to make sure that the GCM objective reach their full potential.**

SIRIUS – Designing an EU inclusive society: the role of migrant labour market integration policies

Simone Baglioni, University of Parma

Sirius is a cross-national research project that provides evidence-based knowledge about which aspects play an enabling role and which play an obstructing role in relation to the integration of post-2014 migrants, refugees, and asylum applicants in European labour markets.

Policy recommendations:

Expand labour market eligibility of migrant groups through post-covid 19 ad hoc recovery plans and strategies.

Migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers need to be part of the next generation of labour market integration strategies and programs, as this can contribute to the realization of equality and social justice. The eligibility of specific migrant groups to participate in labour market integration programs should be expanded. Groups that could be included are: *Asylum seekers*, who have not yet received their asylum decision. Because of the long wait for asylum decisions in many countries, extending eligibility for these programs to asylum seekers with good prospects for a positive decision might allow more rapid integration, reducing the burden on public finances. *Economic migrants*: Although they already have work, and do not necessarily have time to engage in integration training, many would like better access to language training, which would allow them better job opportunities. *Parents* who are caring for children sometimes miss out on integration programs because they are not in the job market during their eligibility period, or do not have the time.



Simone Baglioni (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Ensure quality employment and fair working conditions for different types of migrants.

Ensuring that new jobs are quality ones that allow migrants and refugees to enjoy a decent standard of living and contribute to their well-being and to a robust economy should lie at the core of an inclusive, rights-based, and human-centric integration agenda.

Policy-makers need to empower migrants to advance decent working conditions and enhance job security, through prioritizing this in the European Labour Authority. More efforts are required to build a common understanding about the necessity to promote equality for migrants workers and ensure – in accordance with internationally agreed normative standards, such as the widely ratified ILO Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111) – that migrants are not being subject to discrimination, stigmatization and harassment in their workplace based on their ethnicity, skin colour, country of origin, occupation or travel history.

Value the contribution of civil society organizations and establishing appropriate tracking and monitoring systems.



Civil society organizations (CSO's) are an important bridge between migrants, public authorities, experts, and employers. They must use that experience and knowledge to monitor, assess, and work towards the articulation and development of inclusive integration. Ultimately, policy responses based upon robust monitoring, impact assessment, and sex-disaggregated data can support more evidence-based economic policy measures. Recognizing this role of CSO's in the wider migration policy landscape requires, first and foremost, shaping enabling policy environments.

Moreover, the promotion of CSO's in decision-making structures - through channels of policy co-production - can be a significant tool for achieving social inclusion and cohesion with a strong focus on migration, from local to European levels. In this time of crisis recovery, the growth of the third sector often requires public policies to recognize the particularities and added value of CSO's working with migrants in economic, social, and societal terms.

Strengthen social dialogue mechanisms to ensure the realization of equity and social justice.

Social dialogue has an important role to play in building consensus on the necessary policy and legal reforms and ensuring social justice and decent work for all especially in times of crisis recovery. They are also critical in contributing to the realization of inclusive rights-based integration for migrants, especially migrant workers in the informal economy in the agriculture industry of Southern regions who – as SIRIUS findings show - are in extremely precarious situations, often not covered or insufficiently covered by formal social protection arrangements and lack voice and representation in social dialogue processes.

Strengthening social dialogue requires enhancing the capacity of state actors and employers' organizations to take action on two fronts – first, the development of integrated strategies to support formalization of work. Second, addressing the entire range of priorities to improve migrant labour market integrations prospects. The consequences of the covid-19 crisis, and its devastating impact on the livelihoods of migrant workers and enterprise owners, add even greater urgency to the promotion of sustainable formal employment opportunities in European economies.

Prioritize social investment and economic stimulus to support inclusive rights-based migrants' integration.

National recovery policies and incentive packages should prioritize social innovation and investment programs targeting migrant workers and enterprise owners. In this area, national policy-makers should act proactively and exploit the new knowledge generated through EU peer learning and the use of existing EU governance frameworks that promote the exchange of best practices and provide guidance to Member States – particularly the Open Method of Coordination mechanisms and venues for collaboration. These are vital tools for pushing for support of innovative migrant-focused social and employment policies, along with considering how integration benchmarking architectures can effectively mature into national and local policy-making tools to promote the integration of MRAs.

Recognize migrants' skills and their positive contribution to post-covid 19 recovery.

European countries and institutions have a strong interest in investing in migrant-inclusive labour markets and in embedding the structural contribution of, and reliance on migrants in national skills-related policy design. Recognition of prior home country education and experience, both in terms of



formal recognition of certificates and employer recognition in recruiting should improve. Visible in all the SIRIUS countries, was a perceived need by migrants to start their education from the beginning again, because of a devaluing of foreign qualifications. More should be done to convert foreign qualifications into domestic equivalents, and to promote to employers the value of these qualifications. Programs at education institutions designed to bring foreign qualifications up to local standards should be considered.

WELCOMING SPACES – Policies and Governance in building welcoming spaces in Altenburg, Thuringia (Germany)

José Ricardo Martins, University of Siegen, Germany

The Welcoming Spaces explores new ways to merge two policy challenges in Germany, Italy, Poland, Spain and The Netherlands: How to contribute to the revitalisation of shrinking areas in the EU while also offering a welcoming space for non-EU migrants to pursue their life projects. To guide our research, the following question was formulated: *How to achieve inclusive and sustainable development in shrinking regions, contributing to revitalisation while providing opportunities for the successful integration of non-EU migrants?*



José Ricardo Martins (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Analytically we operate three dimensions and four contextual factors in our research based on an interdisciplinary approach¹:

- Welcoming spaces emerge from a situation that is characterized by challenges in social well-being and/or economic viability and/or political stability. The results of welcoming initiatives are the degree of revitalization in communities/regions – characterized by higher degrees of economic viability, social wellbeing and political stability - combined with the degree to which non-EU migrants are successfully integrated. These are the **dimensions** of our research
- The processes which affect these results are geography/positionality, governance and policies, discourses, and citizen-migrant engagements. These are the **contextual factors** that explain the results on the dimensions.

The analysis of these processes is a result of interventions in the field by a transdisciplinary team of researchers, a community of practice, working along with practitioners and all stakeholders together.

[Some findings and recommendations per country:](#)

¹ Welcoming Spaces (2021). Welcoming Spaces structure and guidelines, Working document. University of Utrecht.

In the **German** case, anti-migration political forces have advanced at all political levels. The right-wing extremist party *Alternative für Deutschland* (AfD) has gained ground and has put under pressure local and regional integration measures and financing programs.

Some preliminary policy recommendations for the German case are: the potential of migrants should be in the centre of a new winning narrative in the political discourse; a better communication strategy has to be envisioned, especially on the resignification of the role of migrants: less as profiteers and an object of electoral disputes, and more as human beings of full capacities, highly motivated that are seeking opportunities to start a new life and can have an active role in the re-development of shrinking areas.²

In **Italy**, increasing populism, linked to austerity measures and unemployment, as well as the Covid-19 pandemic, led to a growing marginality of shrinking areas and the conditions of the vulnerability of these communities.

Some recommendations from Italy include envisioning migration considering migrants' personal aspirations combined with local development needs and specificities; strengthening participatory processes for the whole community (migrants included); implementing the place-based approach with multiple voices; bringing the migration issue into other policy areas to move away from the securitarian framework; ensuring fairer accesses to housing through incentives at national, regional and local level.³

In **Poland**, our team has found that non-state actors (mainly non-governmental organizations) and their activities at the local level play a central role in creating welcoming spaces, mainly concerning forced migrants who live in centres for refugees. The biggest challenges for the well-being of migrants are finding a job and a place to live, as the opportunities for renting a house outside the market system are limited.⁴

Some recommendations regarding the social well-being of migrants include providing free legal counselling and basic information for migrants in the most common languages; developing social housing; introducing good quality multicultural and anti-discriminatory education in the regular curricula of primary and secondary schools; hiring cultural mediators; providing appropriate training for teachers working with migrants; teach Polish as a foreign language to migrants. In the dimension of economic viability, enabling faster access to the labour market for asylum seekers and improving career counselling for migrants in local labour offices. Concerning political stability, our team recommends providing a clear framework for national integration policy and defining political sources of financial support for NGOs and creating, at the local government level, a platform for social dialogue between the local community and newcomers.

In **Spain**, the design and implementation of demographic policies became priority action lines in government, as this challenge is a fundamental dimension of social and territorial cohesion. Given the shrinking area challenges, the Autonomous Region of Galicia, for example, has designed policies in view of social and labour integration of immigrants and returnees, including actions to facilitate access to

² Foelske, L. and S. Meier (2022). *Country Report – Germany*, Working document (draft). University of Siegen

³ Bergamaschi, M., C. Davino, A. Lomonaco, M. Moralli, P. Musarò and P. Parmiggiani (2022). *Country Report: Italy*. Working document (draft). University of Bologna.

⁴ Szałańska, J. G., E. Jastrzębska, P. Kubicki, P. Legutko-Kobus, M. Pachocka and J. Z. Popławska (2022). *Poland Country Report*. Working document (draft). SHG Warsaw School of Economics.



public services. Additionally, we found that some regional governments encourage the return of the emigrated population, and not the arrival and emplacement of non-EU immigrants.

Some recommendations from the Spanish team to create welcoming spaces are: the migrant population should not be seen as a homogeneous group, so more diversity in the projects addressing migrants is needed; direct orientation and institutional support from national and regional spheres to local public administration in migrant reception planning; alternative reception channels open for migrants not related to the labour market but centred on the emplacement of the migrant population; and promote housing facilitation through the promotion of alternative ways of renting and access to public housing.⁵

Break-out discussion



Massoud Sharifi Dryaz (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Following the presentations, moderator Massoud Sharifi Dryaz from the SO-CLOSE project addressed the project representatives with a collection of questions:

How can the inclusion process guarantee innovative participatory co-creation without falling into the buzzword trap?

Dynamic two-way integration needs to be put in practice, not just mentioned on paper. This includes understanding and responding to the local specificities of each case. There is no one-

size-fits-all approach; Instead, programs and solutions need to be co-created from the core by including the different actors in creating the programs from the start, so that their local circumstances are part of the equation. Fundamentally, the idea that migration is something exceptional needs to be challenged. Migration is part of human history. The arbitrary nature of one's birthplace needs to be at the forefront of people's awareness to challenge the narrative of "the other". Additionally, there is a current momentum of increased use of digital communication since the pandemic, which should be further developed to integrate people across distances or with otherwise limited access to specific spaces.

How can negative narratives about migrants be countered in reality?

To counteract these negative narratives, it is imperative to strengthen more welcoming narratives so that companies feel less obliged to follow the pressure of right-wing oriented voter regions. To facilitate the mutual support, both actors – local citizens and newcomers - need to be on the same level. This requires that newcomers have the right to take an active role, which would facilitate migrant engagement as well as communicate to locals the fact that migrants and locals are equal, as humans and in their capacity and willingness to contribute to the local community. Remote areas are very

⁵ Alonso, P., K. Espiñeira González, M. B. Fernández Suárez, L. Oso and L. Santaballa Santos (2022). *Country Report: Spain*. Working document (draft). University of A Coruña.

interesting microcosms that need migrants. Many examples exist that show communities react and adapt very well and innovatively to retain migrants.

Both FOCUS and Welcoming Spaces talk about changing the image of migrants. But who should be doing this? Who is responsible for changing the narrative?

Research shows that people change their minds by experience not by being told. The more migrants live in an area, the less anti-migrant sentiments prevail. High quality exchanges between all actors need to be part of the integration work and spaces of exchange need to be facilitated. One of the pathways to protection is sponsorships, where people from communities take on sponsorship roles to support refugees. Civil society needs to be part of the process.

In the media, migration is often addressed emotionally rather than rationally. The media needs to allow the voices of migrants to be heard, as well as portray rational perspectives on their contributions. Misperceptions of i.e., the level of dependence of migrants must be challenged. However, the media often follow political leadership, who should challenge prevailing narratives of prejudices and *othering*.

While all five projects are very diverse, some overlaps could be identified to highlight most relevant best practices and policy recommendations. The topic of co-creation and participation is one of those prevailing themes. The multi-level, multi-dimensional process of inclusion requires co-creation and participation which in turn requires willingness from all actors – migrants as much as citizens, politicians, and other stakeholders - to contribute. The importance of narratives and perceptions was also identified as a recurring challenge for inclusion processes.

Break-out session (ii): Fostering exchange and challenging narratives in cultural spaces

Moderator: Dominika Kasprowicz, Villa Decius Association, Poland

The five projects in break-out session (ii) *Fostering exchange and challenging narratives in cultural spaces* were:

CHIEF – Investing in Culture for Young Europeans

Mariona Ferrer-Fons, Pompeu Fabra University, Spain

TRACTION – Opera Co-Creation for a social transformation

Mikel Zorrilla Berasategui, Vicomtech, Spain

MICADO – Remediating Migration Divides Through Digital Services: what inclusion is possible?

Carla De Tona, Bologna University, Italy

PERCEPTIONS – Creative interventions – challenging migration narratives and policy responses

Sergei Shubin, Swansea University, UK

SO-CLOSE – Promoting mutual understanding between refugees and the local communities in Europe: Policy recommendations

Elena Monicelli, Peace School Foundation of Monte Sole, Italy



CHIEF -Investing in Culture for Young Europeans

Mariona Ferrer-Fons, Pompeu Fabra University, Spain

The CHIEF research project explores young people's cultural practices, heritage, and identities in various educational contexts (schools, NGOs, peer groups and families).

Policymakers should:

- Adopt a broad and inclusive definition of culture and youth cultural practices as plural and complex.
- Bring multiple stakeholders into the cultural policy planning process, including young people and those from under-represented groups and localities.
- Ensure relevant non-formal and informal organisations are officially recognised as providers of cultural learning activities for young people as it is done with formal institutions, and that public funding is allocated to them.
- Adopt equity as a primary objective of cultural policies and work to implement programmes that can mitigate the impact of wider inequalities.
- Create a commission/mechanism for formal educational providers through which gaps in curricula can be addressed, and through which appropriate anti-discrimination training can be provided if needed.



On screen: Mariona Ferrer-Fons (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Cultural institutions should:

- Encourage inter-ethnic dialogue by opening up cultural institutions to difficult pasts and critical discussion of exclusionary views
- Expand and diversify approaches to culture and heritage to include local, regional and diasporic cultural traditions alongside
- Identify local, regional and national cultural opportunities in partnership with providers across formal, semi-formal and informal settings in order to shift away from the dominance of 'high culture' in the sector
- Match cultural activities with young people's identities and interests, including the digital space, working with young people themselves and youth workers
- Work with policymakers and decision-makers to create plans to mitigate the impact of wider inequalities on access to cultural opportunities across physical and digital spaces

Formal educational institutions should:

- Build recognition of young people's lived experiences and cultural knowledge into the curriculum and everyday school life

- Reform curricula to ensure that cultural education is embedded across subject areas and is accessible to all young people, regardless of their educational pathway, and that appropriate training and support is provided to all staff
- Create opportunities for inter-cultural encounters to facilitate learning about commonalities and differences across diverse cultures and heritages at local, regional, national, and international levels, developed through training and support for staff.

TRACTION – Opera Co-Creation for a social transformation

Mikel Zorrilla Berasategui, Vicomtech, Spain



Mikel Zorrilla (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

TRACTION aims to promote, through their empowerment, a transformation of communities at risk of exclusion. To achieve that goal, we will establish an effective collaborative and participatory production workflow for the co-creation and co-design of art representations, using a community-centric methodology to conduct a dialogue, and exploring novel audio-visual formats. A toolset will be designed and developed to foster the democratisation of opera, using technology as a means to reach new audiences and to connect artists with audiences. TRACTION will provide a bridge between opera professionals and specific communities at risk of exclusion based on trials, understood as experimental attempts, to foster an effective community dialogue between diverse individuals at risk of exclusion in three very different situations across three counties: Ireland, Portugal, and Spain. It is our conviction that the day when all Europeans feel part of and welcome in an opera house, we will know that we will have started to overcome social exclusion.

Although the final policy recommendations have yet to be presented at the end of the project, some [preliminary recommendations have been made](#):

- **Born accessible:** accessibility is essential to gain a wide audience, and accessibility has to be a prerequisite, taking into consideration people with disabilities and people at risk of exclusion as end users. To this aim, the European Union has a framework of regulations that need to be applied so as to ensure equal opportunities are given to all.⁶
- **Cross-fertilisation for Media Co-creation:** The co-creation methodology of media content has proven to be a dynamic collective way to generate, re-use and repurpose existing media assets. This collaborative production approach is shared by three H2020 funded projects: TRACTION (870610) SOCLOSE (870939), and MEDIAVERSE (957252). The objective is to enable the translation of legal characteristics and requirements into machine-readable data which is needed for the negotiation and the execution of smart contracts.⁷

⁶ <https://www.traction-project.eu/traction-quoted-as-born-accessible-at-the-european-parliament/>

⁷ <https://www.traction-project.eu/cross-fertilisation-for-media-co-creation-copyrights-across-three-h2020-funded-projects/>

MICADO – Remediating Migration Divides Through Digital Services: what inclusion is possible?

Carla De Tona, Bologna University, Italy

MICADO aims at facilitating the exchange between migrants, public authorities and engaged civic society and ease migrants' access to regular social systems (housing, education, health care, and labour) and counselling services through attractive digital services. While aiming at improving the management of migration integration into host communities, it also contributes to the opportunities migrants have to actively participating in society. MICADO is a H2020 four-year interdisciplinary international project (currently in its last stage) that involves research institutions, public authority agencies and SMEs from Germany, Belgium, Italy, Spain and Austria, whose purpose is to co-develop a technical tool that can be adapted by the local actors to their respective local challenges and manage migration issues with a local solution.



Carla de Tona (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Among the project's objectives is that of tackling the difficulties arising from the opacity of many of the integration processes and the growing investment in the digitalization of social services - with difficulties related to acquiring reliable and accountable data from Public Authorities, institutional reluctance and a lack of consent and trust. This is one of the core themes for innovation in recent times as well as during the COVID-19 pandemic.

MICADO has adopted a co-creation approach in co-analysing, co-designing, and co-implementing the digital solution, through multi-stakeholders' workshops and collaborations. In relation to migrants' participation, it has promoted workshops with group discussions, interactive games, interviews, and an articulated public piloting approach.

The result has been the creation of an Application with three user-centric interfaces for Public Authorities, Non-Governmental Organizations, and Migrants, which help facilitating direct communication and data exchange of the target groups, through customized and centralized information and service offer, and the use of interactive technology, client applications and data exchange technique like chatbot and client dashboards.

Policy recommendations: Whose narratives have we been representing?

➤ What worked

- The inclusion of a dedicated type of Work Package (Local Uptake and Sustainability) and the inclusion of Public Administrations in the Consortium (Four out of 15 partners) ensured that the

project's actions have been successfully embedded in the pilot cities' migrant integration activities.

- The empowering of three cohorts of individual users in the co-creation approach enabled direct participation and in the migrants' case, enabled an active personal integration process.
- The COVID-19 pandemic brought an acceleration of digitalization, which proved challenging but also brought to the fore MICADO's objectives, amidst a growing investment in the digitalization and democratization of innovation.

➤ **What proved challenging**

- In the European context, different historical, political, and economic circumstances make it difficult to extract commonalities among the partner cities. Some of the city specific demands had to be evaluated *ad-hoc* and could not be integrated in a common framework.
- Bridging the divide between technical and non-technical partners required an extra effort, with social scientists playing a key role in translating experiential knowledge to technological knowledge.
- Over the four years span, the project faced challenges prompted by the volatility of the political agendas (with local and regional administrative elections), which in turn brought shifts and changes of the Public Administrations' stakeholders with whom the project had interacted.
- One of the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic has been the growing presence of competing digital tools and websites, as well as the dispersion of information in diverse sites. Moreover, the evidence remains that migrants and refugees often trust information provided through social media rather than official resources such as government websites.

➤ **Reflections on Migrants' Participation**

- Migrants' categories change over time and space. This negatively affected the capacity the project has had to include diverse migrants' cohorts. For example, some groups of young asylum seekers involved in the initial phase of the Usability Test of the prototype, were dispersed, just after few weeks from the first contact and could not be reached again to follow up with the public testing.
- Migrants' uncertainty and lack of legal status diminishes the level of trust in the institutions and digital services (concerns with privacy, security, and data protection). This curbed the inclusion of some migrants' categories in the project and limited the implementation of an effective co-creation approach. Marginal and vulnerable groups of migrants have been difficult to reach and when included in the project, their participation was often disrupted by the difficult conditions they found themselves in (as in the example of refugee women with their children interviewed in reception centres).
- The structural inequalities reflected also in the language and digital divides migrants experienced, based on inequalities in physical access to and use of digital technology, as well as the skills necessary to use the different technologies effectively. Ultimately, these divides have proved some cohorts of migrants inaccessible and underrepresented, warning us that although new technologies have the potential to create a more inclusive society, they also have the power to amplify existing inequalities.



PERCEPTIONS – Creative interventions – challenging migration narratives and policy responses

Sergei Shubin, Swansea University, UK

The PERCEPTIONS project examines how Europe, and the EU are seen by people who have immigrated there or intend to do so. It examines what perceptions of Europe exist among migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers, how they are formed, whether they correspond to reality and how they influence migration decisions. We also examine how the flow of information could be distorted and whether inaccurate information could lead to a threat to the security of migrants (e.g., through dangerous border crossings) or even national security (e.g., through radicalization).



Sergei Shubin (Foto: Matteo Cogliati)

In contributing to the main topic of this roundtable event and its focus on developing practices that foster inclusion in Europe, we draw on the analysis of literature and empirical findings that uncover different elements of migration (imaginative, corporeal, spiritual). We attempt to widen the scope, impact, and expressive potential of existing practices of hospitality to migrants, focusing on three specific contributions (in this specific presentation):

First, we offer an opportunity to **re-energize existing good practices** and to re-think a narrow set of ideas around what constitutes the operational context for such practices. A lot of approaches used by first-line migration practitioners, CSOs and migrant organizations in day-to-day work are language-dependent, which reduces their reach, engagement, and adoption by migrants. While celebrating the “traditional” competencies (language, literacy, math) in migration context is important, we also considered other creative possibilities of learning and doing (such as drawing, photography, film-making, music). Our focus was on learning together and sharing creative outputs to gain purchase on the research insights from PERCEPTIONS interviews with the migrants.

Second, we draw on the inter-disciplinary strengths of the PERCEPTIONS consortium to reshape existing practices to **include possibilities for experimentation** and **avoid routinization, foreclosure, and domestication of important issues** of safety, integrity, security, perception in relation to migrant’s expectations. To broaden traditional mechanisms of knowledge production, we produced materials that encourage improvisation and spontaneous interventions for acknowledging contradictory migration narratives and unsettling existing migration stereotypes. This project brings together diverse materials such as technologies, memories, emotions so that they can generate surprising encounters and allow alternative institutional responses. We wanted to express **multiple and shifting narrative points of view, includes voices of different speakers**, drawing attention to the ineffable, inter-subjective and more-than-rational links with migrant surroundings that lie outside rationality and exceed language.



Third, the key part of the PERCEPTIONS project was to **examine what perceptions of Europe exist among migrants**, how they are formed, whether they correspond to reality as it is perceived by different mobile actors. Existing policy approaches often create binary categorizations of narrative settings as actual (geographical) or hypothetical (imagined), false or real, positive, or negative, story-internal, or story-external. To avoid recreating such binaries, we expressed **multiple and shifting narrative points of view**, paying attention to non-representational, emotional, affective, and non-linguistic elements of migrants' experiences. Our project opens up alternative expressions of migration that create counterfactual geographies and seemingly impossible worlds, fictional situations and unstable author's positions, which help to **destabilize the notions of 'normality', 'importance' and 'acceptance' of migrant perceptions in the key discussions about inequality, normative ethics and justice.**

Examples of practical contributions developed by the project include:

- [Re-imagining PERCEPTIONS in sound, music and sonic media](#)
- [Re-imagining migration stories: animation](#)
- [The PERCEPTIONS handbook](#)
- [PERCEPTIONS platform](#)

SO-CLOSE – Promoting mutual understanding between refugees and the local communities in Europe

Elena Monicelli, Peace School Foundation of Monte Sole, Italy

SO-CLOSE examines the interconnected roles of memory and cultural heritage for better social cohesion. Based on fieldwork with asylum seekers, refugees, and migrants, as well as experts and local community representatives, SO-CLOSE has identified the following strategically relevant points regarding representation and narratives around migration:

Memory and remembrance are simultaneously the origin and the reproduction tools for the self-definition of a person, a community, and a group. The history of the other is insufficiently acknowledged in school curricula or in the media. There is a need to share both the personal dimension as well as the historical context when talking about the migrant other.

Social cohesion may be undermined through a subtle discrimination narrative in the receiving communities that frames human rights as not automatically given but in need to be earned and deserved. Representations of refugees and asylum seekers as “economic resources” and as “inherently on the move” neglect the complexity of migrants as human beings with a past, needs, and own ideas.



Elena Monicelli (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Refugees, asylum seekers and migrants showed a strong desire to share their **cultural heritage**. However, they noted that receiving communities distort these heritage narratives by selectively including only the parts that describe the newcomers as “ambassadors”, “exotic”, or “homogeneous”. These personal migrant stories need to be represented fully, to reduce the distance between “us” and “them”.

Policy recommendations as voices from the field

Encouraging processes of truth acknowledgement and restorative justice

The European Union needs to be an influential actor in starting, supporting, fostering, and enhancing transitional justice processes within the context of the countries of origin of refugees and asylum seekers. This requires acknowledging the legacies of gross human rights violations, including the one in which EU countries had a role. Gross human rights violations represent an obstacle to a personal and collective elaboration of trauma, which is a huge barrier for social cohesion. Supporting transitional justice processes in the refugee/migrant home countries, can break the usually rigid representation of refugees and asylum-seekers as pure victims, and instead support different images such as the ones promoting the idea of survivor or society re-builder.

Fostering decolonization processes on European memory and memorialization

The European Union needs to strengthen initiatives of re-signification and processes of inclusive meaning-making towards cultural heritage items. There is a need to change the narratives regarding unbalanced, violent, and unjust relations among countries and populations. The same attention that is paid to research and programs around memories of i.e., WWI, WWII, the Cold War, and the mass atrocities connected to those events needs to be paid to those historical phases in which European countries expressed their will of conquest, domination and supremacy, namely colonialism.

Encouraging inclusive curricular study programs

Education policies in all EU Member States should design curricula with a more complex vision of past historical events and culture. History and memory as school subjects are too often addressed from a West-centric perspective, which causes a hierarchical and limited selection of what is deemed important and relevant in terms of cultural and historical preservation and transmission. It is necessary to offer a new perspective: different memories can be in dialogue and there is no need for one memory narrative to dominate the others.

Taking actions towards a more shared system of policies for refugees and asylum seekers in all the EU countries

The European Union needs to encourage its members to adopt basic best practices proven effective in improving the reception system and the social impact of newcomers.

Proven best practices in fostering social cohesion are i.e.:

Preference for first and above all second reception system made of many and small residential solutions instead of few and vast centres of lodging.

- Preference for locations within the residential areas of the host countries instead of isolated places, to increase the possibility of cultural heritage sharing.



- Implementation of early-age educational services to favour the inclusion of minors and, through them, the inclusion of adults.
- Support common activities in public spaces to break the (self-) confinement of individuals and communities.

Break-out discussion

Moderator Dominika Kasprowicz from the SO-CLOSE project addressed the project representatives with the following questions:



Dominika Kasprowicz (Foto: Matteo Cogliati)

How can trust in institutions be created to avoid misinformation?

Trust is quintessential for any provision of services as well as in the larger integration process. To create trust, participation and co-creation are key. This means the source of information needs to be known, and it can only truly be known via spaces of exchange and interaction. In the context of research on migration and inclusion, the more time researchers spend in the local

spaces and create quality exchanges with migrants, the more trust is built. There is a need to change the research culture in this regard.

Is the immediate abolition of asylum reception camps a possible solution to prevent continuous trauma? How can persistent stress disorders faced by migrants be healed?

Trauma requires a lot of personal work and professional support. Individual care would be a good solution for that, which requires a lot of resources, but innovative solutions are needed here. Camps are a necessity for transitional times but become problematic when they become long-term solutions. They allow immediate humanitarian aid that is often needed at first entrance, but they should be only a temporary, transitional place.

The current examples at the Ukrainian-Polish borders show citizens are taking over organization of micro shelters, and micro immigration camps are being set up around the Polish cities. The question of 'Why is it possible now? Why was it not possible a few months ago?' probably connects to a shared cultural heritage and years of joint projects between Polish and Ukrainian citizens.

How can efforts to change and challenge narratives avoid the risk of being classified under "cancel culture"?

It is about resignification, not cancelling, which requires co-creative meaning making. It is not beneficial to delete, but there has to be a different meaning associated to commemorations. The changing and challenging of narratives needs to be communicated from the perspective of resignification.



Co-creation, however, is a point of challenge, as contributors very easily just get assigned the role of testers or sounding boards, rather than creators. There is a strong need within the social sciences to specify what co-creation means in an SSH context.

EC Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion 2021 – 2027 and links with AMIF funding

Luca Barani, DG Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, European Commission

The new action plan on integration and inclusion represents part of EU's new comprehensive approach to migration and asylum in an effort to increase the support for migration stakeholders at all levels. Considered as the building bricks of successful integration are the sectors of education, health, housing, and employment. These are approached with focus on five specific priorities across all sectors. These priorities are aimed to be achieved following five principles: inclusion for all, targeted support at all stages of the integration process, multi-stakeholder partnerships, as well as anti-discrimination incl. on a gender basis.



Luca Barani (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Housing	Education	Health	Employment
[Horizontal priorities] - Building strong partnerships - Increasing EU funding for integration - Fostering participation - Enhancing the use of digital tools for integration and inclusion - Monitoring the process			

Integration is understood as a two-way process with both rights and obligations. Non-discriminatory access to education, work, housing, health, and education is one of these obligations the host has to fulfil to enable integration.

The level of digital access is one of the main priorities in these integration efforts. How can equal digital access to services be granted? DG HOME encourages member states to establish open provision of these services from a human-centric perspective.

A challenge remains the centralized organization of mainstreaming the projects' results and truly

integrating and broadcasting their outcomes on a European level to maximize their impact.

Top Manta - Ethical streetwear co-operative for legal labour market access

Papalaye Abdoulaye Seck, Top Manta, Spain, translated by Dorleta García, TRACTION



Papalaye Abdoulaye Seck (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Papalaye Abdoulaye Seck joined the event to speak as representative of the Top Manta union trade and non-profit organization. The organization was born in 2015 as a union to protect hawkers from recurring violence and other sources of precariousness and exposure.

By offering work contracts to migrants, one of the big hurdles to integration – receiving a work permit – is eased by giving migrants a legal way into the labour market. The aim is to offer a dignified way

into living in Europe. The brand's main activity is local commerce: design, sewing, serigraphy and sale of their own fashion line, and screen-printing services, but part of their work is also emotional support and awareness raising.

"There are many laws and territories within Europe, but they should consider all people as human beings, provide the right to work to all people in the place where they live."

The organization aims to create awareness about the violence and discrimination immigrants are exposed to on a daily basis by organizing and participating in demonstrations and gaining media coverage. Migrants travel across very dangerous and even life-threatening routes to then arrive in centres where they suffer double discrimination: for being immigrant and being practically imprisoned, without the awareness of the general public. The work as a union trade is not only legally supporting that people receive working permit, but also emotionally that they can overcome these challenges. Each one's privilege can help others by sharing the suffering and not ignoring it.

Panel Discussion

Moderator: Anamaria Dutceac Segesten, Lund University | SO-CLOSE & PROTECT

Panel members:

- Ainhoa Flecha, Autonomous University of Barcelona | SO-CLOSE
- Alagie Jinkang, University of Bologna | PERCEPTION
- Annelies Zoomers, Utrecht University | WelcomingSpaces
- Carla de Tona, University of Bologna | MICADO
- Damian Boeselager, MEP | represented by Kamilla Solieva
- Evin Incir, MEP | via recorded video message
- Hakan Sicakkan, University of Bergen | PROTECT
- Jussi Laine, University of Eastern Finland | MATILDE
- Maria Mexi, Graduate Institute Geneva - Albert Hirschman Centre on Democracy | SIRIUS
- Mariona Ferrer-Fons, Pompeu Fabra University | CHIEF
- Mikel Zorrilla Berasategui, VicomTech | TRACTION
- Peter MacDonagh, Q4 Public Relations | FOCUS



Panel members (FLTR) in person: Carla de Tona, Peter MacDonagh, Jussi Laine, Maria Mexi, Ainhoa Flecha, Mikel Zorrilla, on screen: Alagie Jinkang, Hakan Sicakkan, Kamilla Solieva, Annelies Zoomers (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Two perspectives on migration and inclusion guided the event's discussions: one more pragmatic, legal, labour, and economy oriented, and the more culturally focused one, about narratives and identities. As previous discussions have highlighted, those aspects are not separate. One informs the other. The main points of the afternoon panel discussion can be summarized as follows:

Recognize migrants' skills and experiences

The priority for many migrants is having their skills and previous experiences recognized, and to be able to use these skills and experiences within the contexts they now find themselves in. Infrastructures to collect and build on these skills are needed from the first day of entrance - both from the perspectives of migrants who want to work and be part of the labour force, as well as from the perspective of an aging European population.

Highlight human rights-based approaches

There is a need to focus on a human rights-based approach on refugee protection instead of just looking at the labour force value. Highlighting only the economic value of migrants is a double-edged sword and should be abandoned in favour of a more human rights approach. While the new labour force might



bring economic value, especially to rural areas in Europe, and while acknowledging the skills, talents and willingness of people to contribute is important to counteract the notion of migrants as a burden to society, their economic value cannot be the deciding argument on who deserves protection and who does not. Human rights-based approaches shift that focus to a more inclusive argument by abolishing the notion of economic value as the basis of protection.

Moreover, the binary narratives of “good” vs “bad” migrants need to be diffused. People are incredibly diverse; locals and migrants are not homogenous groups. As the current case in Ukraine shows, Ukrainian refugees are treated very differently compared to i.e., people from African countries or the Middle East. Accepting Ukraine as a European country has been decisive to foster the opportunities for welcoming their refugees. This positive solidarity and positive narrative towards Ukrainian refugees needs to be extended to all.

Be considerate of the terms migrant, refugee, asylum seeker and their different implications

It is very important to not dilute the legal category of “refugee” by conflating it with “migrant”. Refugees are migrants, but they have additional rights. It is important to keep that distinction as a protection for people fleeing wars. The narratives need to acknowledge that the term migrant is about people moving in search for opportunities, and the term refugee is about people fleeing humanitarian disasters or political violence. The mistake of mixing the two narratives causes the risk of diluting the refugees’ special right to protection.

Reach out, communicate and engage with those of opposing views

Quite often, communication across opposing views fails. Opinions on migration are torn into differing directions, and it is important to address those who think differently. National societies are not as coherent as often portrayed. Simply ignoring these voices is not a solution.

Recognize and address migrants’ traumas that continue in host countries

There is a need to understand people’s traumas from an endemic perspective. The trauma of migration too often continues as a persistent traumatic disorder due to racism and discrimination in the host country. This requires a much more sustainable and humanitarian approach, both in regard to individual mental and bodily health care as well as to reforms of the systems that foster continuous racism and discrimination towards migrants.

Recognize migrants’ past

Cultural heritage is not just about food and music but sharing past memories and the history of one’s family, group or nation. Europeans need to recognize migrants’ past and heritage, even at the risk of uncovering tensions between different perspectives and experiences including confronting Europe’s past role as a colonial power. Refugees should not only be seen as victims but as agents. Refugees were not born as refugees. It is important to talk about their rich heritages, while respecting their heterogeneity as a group.

Focus on quality interactions

European identity is something now assumed by many generations because they have lived experiences of it, but some elites have yet to accept this reality. The quality of interaction between arriving and



hosting community is where the potential lies. At the moment, the overwhelming bulk of integration work and funding misses the potential of the dynamic two-way integration that creates qualitatively rich and fruitful exchanges which lead towards inclusive identity mindsets.

Fair and equal co-creation

Members of vulnerable groups are often expected to give their time for free, but this is not fair. The project partners get paid through the research grants, but migrant informants do not. The participation of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in research projects needs to be substantial and recognized, including economically. Projects need to be co-created and build on trust from the beginning so that the actions reflect the narratives of inclusion and equality.

Learning from the past: This is not a migration crisis

The growing migration flow from Ukraine into neighbouring countries is not a migration crisis, but a challenge because of the concentration of numbers involved. What used to be referred to as a “migration crisis” was -if at all - a management crisis, a crisis of political will. Now there is a completely different political will to approach this situation compared to 2014. The framing is very important.

Need for sustainable databases and knowledge hubs

Many clear results and solutions have been produced by European research projects over the years but the infrastructure to mainstream, integrate, and communicate their availability to relevant stakeholders across Europe is lacking. A centralized organization by the EC in the form of i.e., a sustainable resource database or continuous networks and knowledge hubs is needed to maximize the impact of these results.

Two members of the European Parliament contributed to the panel discussion. **Kamilla Solieva** joined the discussion on behalf of **MEP Damian Boeselager** to address the following questions:

What should be the priority of the EU?

Enforcing rules: If we see that member states are not adopting the rules, there needs to be repercussions, i.e., in regard to push-backs.

Reforming the system: There is a strong need for the solidarity framework. Much of the heavy lifting is carried out by neighbouring states, but mid- to long-term solutions need to be implemented across the EU.

Integration: Either people are pushed back, or they receive asylum status, but that does not always include access to systems like the labour market or healthcare. There is no clear system that guides them on how to integrate and include themselves. Member States need to develop their integration plans. Integration is a responsibility of both the newcomers and the locals as well as authorities.

What are recent developments in integration and migration policies?

The European Parliament currently works on reforming the Blue Card directive, the directive for highly qualified people coming to Europe. This type of reform is necessary to ensure dignified working environments in order to improve migrants’ prospects for integration and social inclusion. Uniform EU rights-based frameworks are necessary to make people feel welcomed. Additionally, a recent



reformation of the European Asylum Agency has acted as a first step to harmonizing the EU's approach on asylum. The crisis regulation has been reformed into a more positive direction by introducing the Prima Facie refugee recognition.

Europe's "Welcome" campaign showcases positive cases of people welcoming refugees and asylum seekers. Over a thousand cities are currently supporting the campaign. Cities, communes, and municipalities need to be more involved in the integration and migration policies. Many cities have reported that they rely on migration due to emigration from the regions.

How do research outcomes affect policy work?

The work is shaped by the contributions and expertise by both academic and civil society organizations. Collaborating with local civil society organisations offers exposure to relevant and timely topics and solutions across Europe. There is a need to coordinate these voices and bring them to EU level rather than to compete with them.

What are the mechanisms for prioritizing topics and solutions?

Legislating is a measure of success. In terms of application and implementation, it is the European Commission that guides the approaches. The progressive groups in the European Parliament think from the migrants' perspectives, so the approach is to measure how much their lives have improved with the legislations that have been made.

What can be done to mainstream a narrative that supports migration?

The promotion of a positive narrative, and normalizing migration, must be met with positive and bold actions. Narratives must match legislation and reform. We can learn from i.e., climate activists who have over the past decades managed to push sustainability to the forefront of everyone's agenda.

MEP Evinc Incir further addressed the relevance of the [new Pact on Asylum and Migration](#) in current times:

The Russian invasion is an unprecedented attack on the rule-based global order and marks the end of peace in Europe. While many Member States that usually take a hard line against migration currently are very welcoming, the concern remains that countries seem to make a distinction between those worthy and non-worthy. This is a violation of Geneva convention. It is necessary that all the Member States take common responsibility. The EU must find a common way forward. The new Pact on Asylum and Migration is about humanity. International law must be respected, in which migrants and refugees' rights are upheld. This needs to be commemorated in a solid common migration and asylum policy in the EU. Countries cannot choose themselves which refugees are worthy of international protection.

"The new pact on migration and asylum needs to ensure safe and legal pathways and common responsibility."



It also needs to include and ensure a good integration and inclusion of new citizens. The migration pact takes a holistic approach to migration processes. It is time to emphasize the co-creation of integration and inclusion processes and provide meaningful solutions. In this moment in time, the EU needs to learn from its previous mistakes and act in the name of humanity.

The roundtable event concluded by highlighting the clear convergence between the ten projects present, despite the variety of their approaches. The policy recommendations are compatible across the areas studied (culture, education, economy, law). The weakness identified by all is that the European Commission, despite a willingness to listen to research outcomes, does not have solid mechanisms in place to make the most out of what researchers have achieved. A topical question is how to maximize the utility of the research finding and their long-term sustainability. One principal aim of the policy roundtable was to facilitate the overview of policy-relevant findings for the European Commission, and we hope we have achieved just that.

Annex

Research projects

The roundtable was co-organized by 10 EU-funded research projects under the Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme to discuss their findings on legal protection of refugees and migrants, on the (economic, cultural, political) impact of their presence on local, regional, or European constituencies, on innovative solutions to enhancing integration and cohesion, and on the role of domestic agents.

In alphabetical order:



Cultural Heritage and Identities of Europe's Future | May 2018 – Oct 2021

CHIEF was about gaining insights on young people's learning and engagement with culture and cultural heritage. Drawing on youth voices and working collaboratively with a range of actors, community groups and institutions, we aimed to build up and put forward more relevant and inclusive approaches to culture, participation, and diversity.

The project aimed at understanding:

- how young people make sense and engage with different aspects of culture and identity;
- whether and how their involvement with different cultural practices leads to an increased understanding of their own and others' cultures;
- whether and how the above help young people's active cultural participation in society.

The focus was on young people aged between 14-25. Considering the significance of informal interactions and learning processes, the research was carried-out in formal, semi-formal and informal settings.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 770464



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Forced Displacement & Refugee-Host Community Solidarity | Jan 2019 – June 2022

FOCUS is led by the IFRC Reference Centre for Psychosocial Support hosted by the Danish Red Cross with partners from nine countries (Austria, Belgium, Croatia, Denmark France, Germany, Ireland, Jordan and the United Kingdom).

FOCUS aims at deepening the understanding of critical dimensions of integration. The project takes stock of the decade passed since the unparalleled influx of more than 1 million refugees and migrants from Syria and other countries (UNHCR 2018), with a special emphasis on psychological and social factors, and makes this knowledge accessible in an efficient and useful way.

Therefore, FOCUS

- maps policies and existing practices;
- carries out field studies at four research sites: Jordan, Croatia, Germany, Sweden;
- supports policy development and programme design;
- develops a practical approach to dynamic integration by collecting case examples and provides implementation guidance.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 822401.



Migration Impact Assessment to Enhance Integration and Local Development in European Rural and Mountain Areas | Feb 2021 – Jan 2023

MATILDE is a 3-year project funded by EU Horizon 2020, focusing on the impact of migration on the local development of rural and mountain regions. The project aims to examine how migration impacts local development and territorial cohesion in European rural and mountain regions, as well as to improve integration and local development.

MATILDE uses a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods and adopts an action-research approach, which that emphasises the agency of migrants and the site-specific features of the regions involved. Accordingly, MATILDE will conduct 13 case studies throughout Europe. Case studies are selected based on the presence of urban poles, differently interconnected with rural and mountain areas via flows of people, economic resources and cultural exchange.

MATILDE partners work together with a multitude of stakeholders to co-construct the migration impact assessment in rural and mountain areas, engaging local stakeholders and beneficiaries, and elaborate and share policy recommendations and governance solutions.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program under grant agreement No 870831.



This event is funded from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme.
Report authorship: ULUND SO-CLOSE project. This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Grant agreement 870939.



Migrant Integration Cockpits and Dashboards | Jan 2019 – June 2022

MICADO aims to facilitate the exchange between migrants, public authorities and engaged civic society and ease migrants' access to regular social systems (housing, education, health care, and labour) and counselling services through attractive digital services. Thus, it will lower the socio-economic effort and expenditure in migrant integration, both for host economies and individuals.



This project has received funding from the European Union's H2020 Innovation Action under Grant Agreement No 822717.



Understanding the Impact of Narratives and Perceptions of Europe on Migration and Providing Practices, Tools and Guides for Practitioners | Sept 2019 – Feb 2023

The PERCEPTIONS project aims to identify and understand the different narratives, images and perceptions of the EU, especially outside of Europe, and their influence on migration and individual decisions to migrate to the EU. Furthermore, it is part of the project's goals to understand the way these various narratives, images and perceptions of the EU are distributed via different channels, including social media and traditional media, how they change across the information cascade.

Its objectives are to identify narratives, images and perceptions of Europe abroad, to investigate how different narratives could lead to problems, false expectations, security threats or even radicalisation in what way; and to create toolkits of creative and innovative measures to react or even counteract on them, considering social, societal and structural aspects.



This project has received funding from the European Union's H2020 Research & Innovation Action under Grant Agreement No 833870.



The Right to International Protection. A Pendulum between Globalization and Nativization? | Feb 2020 – Jan 2023

The vision of PROTECT is to discover ways of further advancing the international protection system within today's turbulent political context. As a corollary to fluctuations in political cleavage systems of host countries, states' policy approaches to international protection are drifting away from the humanitarian norms, objectives and methods provided by the current international law. The international refugee regime risks entering an era of decay because of declining citizen support, increasing party populism, growing government opportunism, and the subsequent scapegoating of international organizations. The United Nations' Global Compact on Migration and the Global Compact on Refugees, which aim to introduce global governance and burden-sharing systems in the areas of migration and international protection, will have to be implemented in a context of international power relations between advocates of different visions of world order and notions of international protection associated with them. In order to assess the challenges and opportunities that the Global Compacts pose, PROTECT organizes its research



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and dissemination efforts around three dimensions of international protection: (a) rights, (b) governance, and (c) public recognition. PROTECT aims to:

- develop perspectives to international protection that address the challenges posed by the current politically turbulent context
- assess the impacts of the Global Compacts on the right to international protection, discovering ways of reconstructing their relationships with the pre-existing legal frames that advance international protection
- assess the impacts of the Global Compacts on the governance of international protection, discovering the most effective modes of global governance
- assess the impact of the Global Compacts on the public recognition of the right to international protection, identifying the networks and discourses that hinder or facilitate support to international protection.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation program under grant agreement No 870761.



SIRIUS
Skills and Integration of Migrants,
Refugees and Asylum Applicants
in European Labour Markets

Skills and Integration of Migrants, Refugees and Asylum Applicants in European Labour Markets

| Jan 2018 – July 2021

Despite the polarisation in public and policy debates generated by the post-2014 influx of refugees, asylum applicants and migrants, European countries need to work out an evidence-based way to deal with migration and asylum rather than a prejudice-based one.

The project, SIRIUS, builds on a multi-dimensional conceptual framework in which host country or political-institutional, societal and individual-related conditions function either as enablers or as barriers to migrants', refugees' and asylum seekers' integration via the labour market.

SIRIUS has three main objectives:

To provide systematic evidence on post-2014 migrants, refugees and asylum applicants especially women and young people and their potential for labour market employment and, more broadly, social integration.

To advance knowledge on the complexity of labour market integration for post-2014 migrants, refugees and asylum applicants, and to explore their integration potential by looking into their spatial distribution (in relation to the distribution of labour demand across the labour market), while taking into account labour market characteristics and needs in different country and socio-economic contexts.

To advance a theoretical framework for an inclusive integration agenda, outlining an optimal mix of policy pathways for labour market integration including concrete steps that Member States and other European countries along with the EU can take to ensure that migrant-integration policies and the broader system of workforce-development, training, and employment programmes support new arrivals' access to decent work opportunities and working conditions.

SIRIUS has a mixed methods approach and innovative dissemination plan involving online priority action networks, film essays, festival, job fair and an applied game along with scientific and policy dialogue workshops and conferences.



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Enhancing Social Cohesion through Sharing the Cultural Heritage of Forced Migrations

| JAN 2020 – Dec 2022

Based on theories of cultural heritage-making, exposing the commonalities of past and present experiences, listening to the target groups' needs and through the development of a methodology template of co-creative design of replicable digital tools and cultural products, SO-CLOSE will improve social cohesion and promote mutual understanding between refugees and their local communities.

The resulting data and methodology will be used to develop several digital applications, for which purpose we have in our consortium strong technological partners with experience in this field. Working at the intersection of history, sociology, cultural studies, art and computer science, SO-CLOSE will design educational and cultural tool like interactive cookbooks, interactive documentaries based on immersive video recording, AI-powered Chatbots, interactive exhibitions based on personal memories and storytelling or an online platform, named Memory Centre, built as a content aggregator and services platform.



This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 870939.



Opera co-creation for a social transformation

| Jan 2020 – Dec 2022

TRACTION aims at promoting, through their empowerment, a transformation of communities at risk of exclusion. To achieve that goal, we will establish an effective collaborative and participatory production workflow for the co-creation and co-design of art representations, using a community-centric methodology to conduct a dialogue, and exploring novel audio-visual formats. A toolset will be designed and developed to foster democratisation of opera, using technology as a means to reach new audiences and to connect artists with audiences.



This Project has received funding from the European Union Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 870610.



Investing in 'Welcoming Spaces' in Europe: revitalizing shrinking areas by hosting non-EU migrants | Feb 2020 – Jan 2024

WELCOMING SPACES aims at searching for new ways to merge two policy challenges: How to contribute to the revitalisation of shrinking areas in the EU while also offering a welcoming space for non-EU migrants to pursue their life projects?



This event is funded from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme.
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Revitalisation refers to the processes which make shrinking regions viable again and sustainable in the sense of offering people a life they value and aspire – where they have access to different kinds of capitals and human rights. Successful revitalisation represents economic viability, social wellbeing and political stability.

Our main assumption is that revitalisation takes place through collaboration between all actors living or working in shrinking regions and can be explained through

- the geographic context and positionality,
- the institutional contexts, including policy and governance arrangements,
- discourse and representations, including public opinion and media
- and the agency of local-migrant engagements.

Our point of departure are existing examples of ‘welcoming spaces’ which do exist in some places, but often remain invisible and dispersed in various European regions in Italy, Spain, but also Germany, the Netherlands and Poland. Such initiatives to create ‘welcoming spaces’ and initiating new types of government-citizen-migrant engagement are often citizen-based but can equally be the outcome of initiatives by governments, grassroots organizations, NGOs, or businesses, including migrant-based/led.

Given the local scale of most of these initiatives, their dispersion in space and political sensitivity, much of what is happening around these ‘welcoming spaces’ remains under the radar. The possibilities for upscaling such initiatives are hence under-explored. In our four-year WELCOMING SPACES project, funded by the Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme, we will address these issues.



This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation program under grant agreement No 870952.

Speakers

In alphabetical order

Ainhoa Flecha, Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain |SO-CLOSE



Ainhoa Flecha (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Ainhoa Flecha has a PhD in Sociology and is Associate Professor at the Department of Sociology of the Autonomous University of Barcelona. She has experience in leading research in the fields of migrations and ethnic minorities and sociology of education. She is member of GEDIME (Group of Studies on Immigration and Ethnic Minorities) and the consolidated research centre CER-Migracions. She is currently the Coordinator of SO-CLOSE (2020-2022) and work package Leader in REFUGE-ED (2020-2023), both focused on refugees and migrants.

Regarding national research, at present she is the Main Researcher of the project UNIROMA: Roma students in Spanish universities, financed by the Spanish National Plan of R+D. Her research has translated in several publications in indexed journals such as the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, Qualitative Inquiry or Sustainability among other. Her professional activity has been complimented with teaching and research stays at Cambridge University (UK), Harvard University (US) and the University of Würzburg (Germany).



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Report authorship: ULUND SO-CLOSE project. This project has received funding from the European Union’s Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under Grant agreement 870939.

Alagie Jinkang, University of Bologna, Italy | PERCEPTIONS



On screen: Alagie Jinkang (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Alagie Jinkang, PhD, is research fellow at the Department of Psychology of the University of Bologna since 2 August 2021. He is currently a researcher within the H2020 project PERCEPTIONS. His research interests concern Human rights & immigration law, Humanitarian aid organizations, Decent work and exploitation in the workplace, social issues in border management and migration, Labour rights of TCNs, African & Afro-American studies, Journalism & media in migration, West African migrations and remittances.

Anamaria Dutceac Segesten, Lund University, Sweden | SO-CLOSE & PROTECT



Anamaria Dutceac Segesten (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Anamaria Dutceac Segesten is Senior Lecturer in European Studies and Docent in Strategic Communication at Lund University, Sweden. She is a work package leader in two Horizon2020 projects, SO-CLOSE and PROTECT, and the academic organizer of the policy roundtable. Her research interests revolve around issues of technology and democracy, in particular transnational political participation and mobilization.

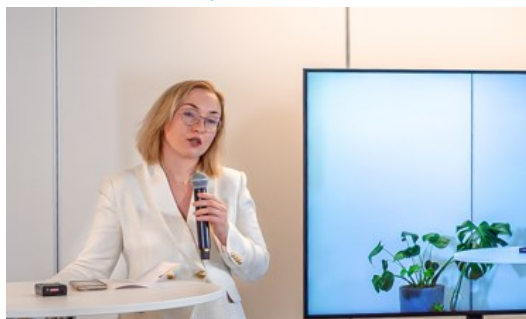
Annelies Zoomers, Utrecht University, Netherlands | Welcoming Spaces



Annelies Zoomers

Annelies Zoomers (programme director Welcoming Spaces) is Professor of International Development Studies (IDS) at Utrecht University and chair of the IS-academy on land governance (LANDac); she is involved in various research projects assessing the implications of migration/investment deals for local development in the context of the global south. She has published extensively about sustainable livelihoods, land policies and the impact of privatisation, tourism and international migration. She is the founding director of Shared Value Foundation and the chair of WOTRO Science for Global Development.

Dominika Kasprowicz, Villa Decius, Poland | SO-CLOSE



Dominika Kasprowicz (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Dominika Kasprowicz is academic researcher and cultural manager, PhD (Degree) in Political Science (2010), Associate Professor at the Jagiellonian University (Institute of Journalism, Media and Social Communication), holder of the European Diploma in Cultural Project Management, and since 2016 director of the Villa Decius, Poland – cultural institution, residency for artists and scholars at risk. Dominika is member of the Executive Board of SO-CLOSE, member of the Interdisciplinary Team of OPEN KRAKOW Programme. Her research area includes cultural diplomacy and management, political communication, populism and social innovations in politics. Recently co-

authored publications: “Communicating Populism. Comparing Actor Perceptions, Media Coverage, and Effects on Citizens in Europe”, Routledge, 2019, “Politics, Society and the Economy in Contemporary Poland. An Introduction”, Scholar 2016.

Elena Monicelli, Monte Sole Peace School Foundation, Italy |SO-CLOSE



Elena Monicelli (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

I have been working at the Scuola di Pace di Monte Sole since 2004 and have been coordinating its activities since 2009. I work on educational projects for the promotion of a culture of peace, solidarity and activism, starting from a reflection on history and the tragic memories of the last century. I graduated in Communication Sciences in Bologna and then did a master's degree in “Cooperation, peace education, human rights and EU policies”. After joining the SdP, my training has continued steadily, encouraged by my colleagues, on the

themes of deconstructing propaganda mechanisms, deconstructing prejudices and analysing the mechanisms of social conditioning. I am a fellow of the Columbia University of New York “Alliance for Historical Dialogue & Accountability” programme for the promotion of human rights through the recognition and analysis of the historical past and its implications on the coexistence of communities and between communities. Within the programme, I have explored the theme “Cooperation, Conflict Resolution, and Mediation in Different Institutional Contexts” and “Politics of memory in post-war Europe”.

Evin Incir, Member of the European Parliament



On screen: Evin Incir (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Evin Incir is a Swedish Social Democrat, with Kurdish roots, who grew up in the suburbs of Bergsjön in the Swedish city of Gothenburg. She is a Member of the European Parliament since 2019 and is serving as the Vice-Coordinator of the Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs, the Committee on Development and Committee on Foreign affairs. In addition to her committee assignments, Incir is part of the Parliament's delegation to the EU-Turkey Joint Parliamentary Committee, the European Parliament's Rapporteur in charge of the relations with Palestine and a member of the LGBTIQ intergroup. She is also a co-president of the European Parliament Anti-Racism and Diversity Intergroup (ARDI). ARDI exists to promote racial equality, counter racism, and educate about non-discrimination in the work of the European Parliament. Evin is the former Secretary General of International Union of Socialist Youth and former Deputy International Secretary of the Social Democratic Party of Sweden. Evin fights to promote democracy, equality and feminism in Europe and beyond.

Hakan G. Sicakkan, University of Bergen, Norway | PROTECT



Hakan Sicakkan

Hakan G. Sicakkan (University of Bergen) is Professor of Political Science at the Department of Comparative Politics at the University of Bergen, Norway.

His areas of specialization include human rights, asylum policies, migration policies, models of citizenship and citizenship policies, European Union politics, European integration, and the European public sphere. Sicakkan is an expert on the EU's and Member States' laws, institutions, and policies regarding the rights of refugees and asylum seekers. He is the principal investigator of PROTECT.

José Ricardo Martins, University of Siegen, Germany | Welcoming Spaces



José Ricardo Martins (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

José Ricardo Martins has a PhD in Sociology (track: State & Citizenship with an emphasis in Public Policy), a Master's degree in Sociology (track: Institutions & Power with an emphasis in International Relations), both received from the Federal University of Paraná in Curitiba, Brazil. He has a bachelor's in Philosophy and in Public Administration, and an MBA from the Catholic University of Louvain, Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium. Currently, he is a post-doctoral fellow at the University of Siegen, Germany, taking part in the EU Welcoming

Spaces project. He has taught, among others, public administration and public policy at the Government School of the Municipal Institute of Public Administration (IMAP) as an invited professor, and Sociology at the Federal University of Paraná, as a substitute professor, both in Curitiba, Brazil.

Jussi P. Laine, University of Eastern Finland, Finland | MATILDE



Jussi Laine (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Project coordinator of the MATILDE project is Dr. Jussi Laine, Associate Professor of multidisciplinary border studies at the Karelian Institute of the University of Eastern Finland. He holds the title of Docent of Human Geography from the University of Oulu, Finland. Currently, he also serves as President of the Western Social Sciences Association (WSSA) and as member of the Steering Committee of IGU's Commission on Political Geography. Jussi Laine is a human geographer, yet in his approach to migration, he combines

influences also from international relations and geopolitics, political sociology, history, anthropology, and psychology.

Kamilla Solieva, on behalf of Damian Boeselager, Member of the European Parliament



On screen: Kamilla Solieva (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Damian Boeselager is a Member of the European Parliament. He holds degrees in Philosophy & Economics from University of Bayreuth and a dual-Master in Public Administration from the Hertie School of Governance and Columbia University's SIPA in New York City. Damian co-founded Volt – a pan-European, progressive, and pragmatic Europe-wide movement with the aim of reforming the European continent and solving the big challenges of our time, including migration and asylum. In the European Parliament, Damian focuses on creating a real European parliamentary democracy, with a focus on establishing regular migration for talent to come to Europe and setting up a common, fair, and fast European asylum system. Damian was one of the negotiators on the Blue Card Directive, an EU tech talent visa. His accredited assistant Kamilla Solieva spoke on his behalf.

Luca Barani, European Commission's Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs



Luca Barani (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Over my 20-year career, I have developed an extensive experience in European policies and initiatives: drafting EU legislation and providing technical advice, supervising activities funded by the EU funds, evaluating EU policies as well as monitoring policy reforms in the EU Member States. I also had the opportunity to work for the Italian Presidency of the Council of the EU, in the second semester of 2014, in between my duties as EU administrator in various DGs: ENTR, ECFIN, EMPL and HOME.

Maria Mexi, Graduate Institute Geneva - Albert Hirschman Centre on Democracy | SIRIUS



Maria Mexi (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Dr Maria (Marilyn) Mexi is an international specialist on Employment and Social policy. Based in Geneva, Dr. Mexi lectures at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies while advising major international organizations, permanent missions and country delegations to the United Nations, as well as employers' and workers' organizations. She is a research fellow at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies' Albert Hirschman Centre on Democracy and the United Nations Institute for Social Development, having also worked as an international specialist on employment and social policy at TASC – Thinking Ahead on Societal Change Platform.

Dr. Mexi has been a consultant at the International Labour Organization (ILO) on social governance and social dialogue problems since 2017. She recently co-edited the ILO Research Brief, "Peak-level Social

Dialogue as a Governance Tool During the COVID-19 Pandemic: Global and Regional Trends and Policy Issues,” the findings of which were included in the joint ILO/OECD report on global labour markets, which was acknowledged in the G20 Riyadh Summit Leaders Declaration. Dr. Mexi has worked for the European Commission as a social policy and employment expert, advising governments in many countries (Croatia, Romania, Moldova, Ukraine, Serbia, and the Caribbean Community) on policy harmonization issues. At the same time, she has extensive expertise overseeing large-scale international development initiatives funded by the European Commission (Europaid) and the World Bank. More recently, she was co-awarded and co-directed the Swiss-funded (SNIS) projects “Gig Economy and its Implications for Social Dialogue” and “Social and Solidarity Economy, Urban Communities, and the Protection of Vulnerable Groups”, and led the Swiss-based research and policy component of SIRIUS. She holds a Doctorate degree (DPhil) in Politics and International Relations from the University of Oxford (St. Anne’s College).

Massoud Sharifi Dryaz, Autonomous University of Barcelona, Spain |SO-CLOSE



Massoud Sharifi Dryaz (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Massoud Sharifi is a sociologist, currently an associate professor at the Autonomous University of Barcelona and an associate member of GEDIME and CER-Migracions. He completed his PhD studies at EHESS (School of Advanced Studies in the Social Sciences-Paris), under the direction of Professor Michel Wieviorka. His research interests lie in social policy and political sociology. He is now a board member of the Catalan Sociological Association and a researcher of SO-CLOSE to analyse and improve social cohesion through the mediation of innovative digital and artistic tools.

Michalis Moschovakos, European Commission's Directorate-General for Research and Innovation



Michalis Moschovakos (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

I am a policy officer in the field of migration working in the Directorate General of Research and Innovation of the European Commission.

Throughout my career I have dealt with migration from various aspects: legal migration, integration, social inclusion and of course research. However, I have a special focus on children and young migrants and the obstacles they face when arriving in our societies.

Mikel Zorrilla Berasategui, Vicomtech, Spain | TRACTION



Front: Mikel Zorrilla Berasategui (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Dr. Mikel Zorrilla (male) is the director of the Digital Media department in VICOM, where he has been working since July 2007. He received his Telecommunication Engineering degree in June 2007 from the University of Mondragon (Spain), an advanced degree in Computer Science in June 2012 from the University of Basque Country (Spain), and the PhD degree in September 2016 from the University of the Basque Country (Spain) entitled “Interoperable Technologies for Multi-Device Media Services”. Before joining VICOM, he has held positions at Ikerlan S. Coop. as assistant researcher (2002-2007) in the field of Transport of Multimedia Traffic. Currently, he is the head of the Digital

Media department and a senior researcher in Interactive Media Technologies. He has been the technical and scientific manager of the European Project MediaScape, and the project coordinator of TRACTION, and has participated in several European and local research projects. He has been an associate professor in the double degree MBA & Computer Engineering in Deusto Business School in the field of Media Technologies.

Papalaye Abdoulaye Seck, Top Manta, Spain



Papalaye Abdoulaye Seck (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Top Manta is the brand of the commercial project of the Mantero Union or Popular Association of Vendors Ambulantes de Barcelona, the Popular Coop of Street Vendors of Barcelona, SCCL. We are a group of around 300 people, mostly Senegalese, who live in Barcelona. Our activities are focused on promoting and favouring the employment of people who are dedicated to street vending, providing assistance and economic resources to the most vulnerable people within the collective, fighting against racism and the structures that allow it and creating research projects’ sociological and cultural

material. Through our activities and our Top Manta clothing brand, we want to make our situation known and that society sees us as we deserve, as what we really are: fighters, workers, with trades and with the desire to work without being harassed daily by the police. We are people who risk our lives to access honest and legal work.

Pauline Endres de Oliveira, University of Giessen, Germany | PROTECT



Pauline Endres de Oliveira

Pauline Endres de Oliveira is a senior research fellow at the Giessen-based Chair of Public Law and European Law. In her PhD thesis, she focused on safe and regulated access to protection in the EU. Previously, she worked as lawyer with focus on migration law in Berlin and as Consultant of UNHCR Germany. Endres de Oliveira teaches refugee law at the Humboldt University Berlin (Refugee Law Clinic) and is tutor of the MA Refugee Protection and Forced Migration Studies at the University of London. She is member of the PROTECT project.

Peter MacDonagh, Q4 Relations, Ireland | FOCUS



Peter MacDonagh (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Peter MacDonagh is a research consultant based in Dublin and Prague. Educated at University College Dublin and Cambridge University his work has addressed the research to policy gap, European democracy, and public opinion research. He is a former senior adviser to the Irish Prime Minister (Taoiseach). While in this role he was responsible for overseeing a wide range of policy areas including the development of Ireland's research infrastructure. For 9 years he was a member of the Board of Science Foundation

Ireland, Ireland's largest funder of advanced research and served as Chair of the Grant Awards Committee. In FOCUS he has, with his colleagues, worked on the issue of practitioner perspectives and the policy impact of the project's research.

Róża Thun, Member of the European Parliament



Róża Thun (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Born in 1954 in Kraków. General Director and Chairwoman of the Polish Robert Schuman Foundation (1992 – 2005). Head of the European Commission Representation to Poland (2005 – 2009). From 2009, Róża Thun is serving as a Member of the European Parliament (EP). In the EP, she works in three Committees: Internal Market and Consumer Protection (IMCO), Environment, Public Health and Food Safety (ENVI) and Committee on Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs (LIBE). She's member of delegation to the EU-Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan

Parliamentary Cooperation Committees and for relations with Turkmenistan and Mongolia. She became the EP's lead negotiator for the removal of roaming charges in the EU, which finally took place in June 2017. Currently, she is working on regulations concerning geo-blocking in online sales, control of discrepancies in the quality of products sold in the Community and on the question of the rule of law in Poland. Since November 2019, Róża Thun is also the Chair of the European Food Forum, which is an independent, politically-led, non-partisan forum led and governed by Members of the EP. One of the main aims of the Forum, also very close to Róża Thun's heart, is to promote open dialogues among all stakeholders on more sustainable food systems as well as a resilient food supply chain. Specifically, Róża Thun is focusing on how to tackle food packaging and food waste challenges. In 2011, 2013, 2014 and 2017 she has been voted "The MEP of the Year" in the category of Internal Market and Consumers Affairs and in 2014 in the category of Internet Policy during the MEP Awards Gala of "The Parliament Magazine".

Sergei Shubin, Swansea University, UK | PERCEPTIONS



Sergei Shubin (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Sergei Shubin is Professor in Human Geography and Director of the Centre for Migration Policy Research (CMPR). His research interests are in migration, poverty and inequality. He is author of publications on migration and poverty in Europe, South America and Asia, and committee member for the Population Geography Research Group at the Royal Geographical Society. In the last 9 years, he secured over £2mn in research funding to Swansea University, including Horizon2020 awards for research on the Impact of COVID19 on vulnerable persons

(particularly migrants), Impact of perceptions and narratives of Europe on migration, UK government's (ESRC) award for research on social security of migrants in Scotland, Newton Fund award for poverty alleviation in Bangladesh and India, and UK government's (ESPA) funding for inter-disciplinary research for poverty alleviation in the Amazon. Apart from academic publications, he produced three exhibitions, five short films, international music event, multi-lingual children's storybook to publicize the empirical and conceptual insights into the migrant experiences and provide inter-disciplinary responses to international migration challenges.

Simone Baglioni, University of Parma, Italy | SIRIUS & MATILDE



Simone Baglioni (Photo: Matteo Cogliati)

Simone Baglioni is Full Professor of Sociology in the Department of Economics and Management of the University of Parma. He is the coordinator and PI of the Horizon 2020 project SIRIUS which investigates barriers and enablers of labour market integration of third country nationals in European countries. Prior to joining Parma University in April 2020, Simone has worked at Glasgow Caledonian University, at the Universities of Geneva and Neuchatel in Switzerland, and at Bocconi University and University of Florence in Italy.

More information to the event can be found on www.inclusive-europe.com

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